



Massachusetts  
Department  
of  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROTECTION

## fact sheet

# Developing an education plan for your recycling program

Many communities attempt to improve recycling programs based on emergencies or in response to problems. The most successful programs are well thought out and planned. Follow these steps in planning your education and outreach program:

### 1. State 3 goals in order of importance.

Your most important goals should get the most of your attention. Why select only three? Your program probably only has the resources to effectively attain a few goals each year. If you spread your program resources too thin, you will be less likely to attain any of your goals. All goals should be developed with a means of measuring their success. The most useful measurement tools are those that quantify success by reducing it to a number such as an increased participation rate. It is also possible to measure “affective” changes such as changes in attitudes, but accurate measurement of this type is more difficult and expensive.

### 2. Attach at least one objective to each goal.

Objectives are like road maps; they show the steps you take to reach your goals. One goal, for example, may be to increase the collection of #2 plastics. Your program might, therefore, initiate an objective of having local retailers place “neck hangers” on plastic milk jugs that remind people to recycle their plastic jugs.

### 3. Identify targets for each objective.

Each program objective should be aimed at a target waste, audience or geographic location. Targeting helps you spend your funds most efficiently, without wasting money on issues or people who do not need to hear your message.

*A target waste might be one that your community is adding to the list of recyclables, such as corrugated cardboard.*

*A target audience might be a group of individuals who have something in common such as people who buy products on-line that are shipped in corrugated containers .*

*A target region might be the neighborhood in which people who buy on-line regularly.*

### 4. Evaluate and select communications vehicles.


Communications vehicles carry your message to your target audience. Traditional vehicles might include printed brochures, newspaper articles, or radio ads. Do not limit yourself to these few – there are hundreds of ways people share and receive information. For example:

Billboards	Newsletters	Shelf Talkers
Brochures	Newspaper Ads	Slide/Video Shows
Bulletin Boards	Newspaper Features	Speaker's Bureau
Cable TV	Phone Hotline/Referral	Surveys
Civic Associations	Point-of-Purchase Info	Television ads and news
Displays	Posters	Utility Bill Inserts
Direct Mail Letter	Radio ads and news	Web Site
Fairs and events	Retail Bag Inserts	Workshops
Lawn Signs	School Competitions	
Neighborhood Training	School Presentations	



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 **Please note:** The state's purchasing office, Operational Services Division (OSD) has issued a statewide **design and printing contract (#1650A) for use by municipalities and state entities**. Using the state contract allows state agencies, authorities, colleges and municipalities to select solid waste and recycling hauling services from a list of qualified state vendors. The paper work of reviewing and selecting vendors is already done for entities using the state contract. More information is available from the OSD web site at:  
<http://www.mass.gov/osd/enviro/products.htm>.

### **Bring Camera Ready Artwork (Disk Or Color Separations) To Your Printer**

Never let a printer make design decisions for you unless they have in-house design artists whose work you have seen. Bring the printer a computer disk or color separations to avoid problems, and insist on seeing a printers' proof or blue line. If you are not satisfied with the outcome, have the printer do the job over (even a good printer sometimes makes mistakes). Demand high quality and you will get it.

### **Waste Reduction Materials Available on the Web**

#### **Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection**

([www.mass.gov/dep/recycle](http://www.mass.gov/dep/recycle)). The DEP provides a variety of written fact sheets and guidance materials for consumers, municipalities, and businesses. Consult their recycling home page for examples of effective print materials.

#### **Minnesota Reduce Waste Campaign** (MN Office of Environmental Assistance)

(<http://www.moea.state.mn.us/campaign/index.html>). The Minnesota "Reduce Waste If not you, who?" campaign provides consumer focused, effective printed material on waste reduction programs for the home, school and office.

#### **California Integrated Waste Management Board** (CA IWMB)

(<http://www.ciwmb.ca.gov/BizWaste/FactSheets/>). The CA IWMB provides a variety of fact sheets for business audiences that are good models for developing effective print materials.